

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

STATE HOUSE • BOSTON 02133

(617) 725-4000

DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

February 7, 2007

Dear Chairwoman Mary Ann Handley; Chairwoman Peggy Sayers and members of The Committee on Public Health,

I would like to offer the following testimony in support of Senate Bill 673, *An Act Concerning Health Insurance Coverage for Bone Marrow Testing*, sponsored by the honorable Senator Handley of Glastonbury.

Over the past couple of years, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of the adoption of similar legislation in this state. Senate Bill 673, which you are considering this week would mandate insurance coverage for bone marrow testing, a law that we currently have in Massachusetts.

John Gallivan, who is now a Connecticut resident, formerly lived in my hometown of Worcester. I came to know John when he served as a legislative aide to then State Rep. James Leary, who is now my Chief of Staff. Less than two years ago, John's wife, Gina, was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL). After receiving chemotherapy treatment at both Hartford Hospital and at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, it was determined that Gina would need a bone marrow transplant.

Over the course of the next several weeks, Jim and John organized bone marrow drives for Gina in both Worcester and Boston. Between the two drives, nearly three hundred people were added in the International Bone Marrow Registry, largely due to the fact that under Massachusetts law the costs of such testing were covered by insurance.

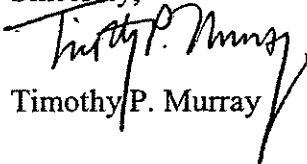
John also organized a bone marrow drive in Wethersfield, Connecticut. The major difference was that people who wanted to be tested in Connecticut had to pay out of their own pockets, unlike in Massachusetts, where insurance companies were mandated to cover the cost of testing.

Connecticut is one of only two states in New England that have not passed this law, and I urge you to do so. Your committee knows the stories of those who struggle with serious medical conditions. The cost of prescriptions, transportation to doctor's offices, and housing for family members are just a few of the hardships faced by many families.

Adoption of this legislation would allow similarly affected Connecticut families to avoid one additional burden. Moreover, it will help to increase the number of donors in the international registry, increasing the likelihood of finding matches for individuals afflicted with leukemia.

It is my hope that Connecticut will join Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Maine in enacting this vital piece of legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Timothy P. Murray". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Timothy P. Murray